

# Oral Treatment for Ringworm

### **PURPOSE**

This document defines the policy and procedure for oral ringworm treatments.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all ringworm program staff and volunteers responsible for assisting with oral ringworm treatments.

### **POLICY**

APA! ringworm program staff and volunteers will administer oral ringworm treatments in accordance with the documented procedures.

### **BACKGROUND**

At APA!, ringworm is treated with a topical lime dip solution and an oral antifungal medication called Terbinafine. It is used with a 'pulse dosing' schedule. Potential side effects of this medication should be monitored appropriately by caretakers and the medical staff; one of the major side effects to monitor for is inappetence.

If an animal is not eating, the medication should be discontinued immediately and the medical staff should be notified.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **1. Treatment criteria**

- a. Cats receiving terbinafine must meet the following criteria:
  - i. Weigh a minimum of two pounds
  - ii. Be at least eight weeks old
  - iii. Should be otherwise healthy
- b. Terbinafine is not prescribed to cats or kittens that:
  - i. Weigh less than two pounds
  - ii. Are underweight
  - iii. Have a history of inappetance or chronic GI issues

#### **2. Oral ringworm treatment**

- a. Terbinafine is initially administered once daily for a period of three consecutive weeks. After the third week, a recheck should be performed to determine whether the cat is clear of ringworm or will require further treatment.
- b. If ringworm is still present, the animal will begin to "pulse" the medication; following the three week course, the animal will take a week off the medication, and then take another week of medication. The medication should be continued with this "week on, week off" schedule until the infection has resolved. Each time the animal completes a "week on," a complete recheck should be performed.
- c. Terbinafine doses are based on a cat's body weight. Cats should receive 30-40 mg per kg of body weight per day, and doses should be adjusted accordingly. If the ward is at high capacity, animals should not start Terbinafine until 2.5 pounds to ensure that the staff can appropriately monitor all cats for potential side effects.
- d. At APA!, all kittens under four pounds are given a liquid suspension of Terbinafine in order to get an accurate dose and to prevent GI distress and inappetence. A medication

- tracker should be filled out for each cat, so that the pulse dose schedule is followed closely.
- e. Cats should begin daily liver supplements after the 6th week of ringworm treatment, and continue them until ringworm is cleared. Rarely, a cat may respond poorly to medication (kittens not gaining weight, decrease in activity or appetite, etc.). If it is suspected a cat is responding poorly, the medication should be stopped immediately, and the clinic should be contacted.
  - f. Some cats cannot handle the oral medication, and will have to be treated topically.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For questions regarding this policy, contact document owner.